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£1.8m revamp for supported living centre for young people

Tenant Harley Bowell tends a new garden at the revamped Banbury Foyer

HOSTEL GETS REFURBISHED

Hannah Somerville
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MORE young people are set to feel the benefit of revamped bedsit facilities at the Banbury Foyer, after a three-year makeover gave it a striking new look.

The £1.8m renovation of the Mawle Court building began in 2012, with refurbishments to shared areas.

Now the centre has living accommodation for up to eight tenants.

Run by national housing provider Sanctuary Supported Living, the foyer provides help and accommodation to young people aged 16 to 25.

Improvements over the two-phase programme included a redesigned reception, an IT suite, and a garden with a vegetable patch and seating area.

A new shared kitchen has also been added, converted from an existing bedsit.

Resident Beth Curtin, 17, said: "The IT suite has made a huge difference to me when I'm looking for work. Before I had to walk through town, handing out CVs. Now I can apply directly for lots more jobs online.

"I'm looking for work in retail and I've been able to apply for so many vacancies I didn't know were out there."

"I get a lot of use out of the kitchen as well. Often we'll cook meals together as a group and I've picked up a lot of new recipes as a result."

New security features have also been added, such as swipe cards for residents' own rooms and fingerprint recognition in communal areas.

At present, 27 young people live in the building. Each bedsit at Banbury Foyer has its own bedroom and kitchen area, ensuite shower and WC. There is an adapted bedsit for tenants with a disability.

Young people wanting to stay at the property must be referred by Cherwell District Council, which has also helped to fund the project.

Director of development, Calvin Bell, said: "Cherwell was pleased to support this initiative by providing funding to aid the redevelopment, and to ensure it provides the very best accommodation for young people.

"We continue to work with Sanctuary to support the Foyer, as well as other accommodation within Cherwell."

Sanctuary Supported Living offers housing and support to thousands of young people and adults across the UK. This includes tailored support for the homeless, people with mental health issues, teenage parents, carers, and people experiencing addiction or domestic abuse.

The Foyer's sister property in Banbury is Rachel House, a special accommodation block for mothers and pregnant women aged 16-25.

Sanctuary local service manager, Louise Powell, said: "The modernisation programme has provided some cutting-edge facilities for our tenants, which will allow us to provide more secure accommodation as we reach out to even more young people."

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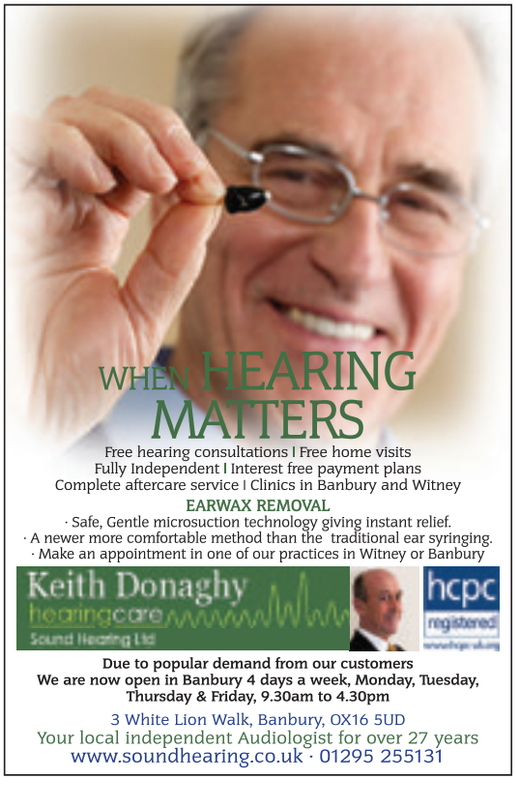

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Strutting dance teacher rocks around the clock

Jordan Conlan was inspired by a Comic Relief marathon to dance for 24 hours at the Joanne Mills School of Dance in Banbury, in aid of Katharine House

Man's 24-hour marathon trip to a boogie wonderland helps out hospice fundraising campaign

Hannah Somerville
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BRINGING new meaning to *Dancin' in the Moonlight*, Jordan Conlan boogied for 24 hours straight in the streets of Banbury for a cause close to his heart.

Mr Conlan, a self-employed dance teacher and fitness instructor, pitched up at the Joanne Mills School of Dance in Parson's Street for his danceathon, from 6pm last Saturday to 6pm on Sunday.

His fundraising target of £500 for Katharine House Hospice was rapidly passed and by Monday the 21-year-old had raised £1,200.

He said: "There were times I didn't think I would make it through, but I wasn't dancing on my own for too much of the time.

"At 4.30am, a local Zumba teacher, Lisa Rodgers, came to do a bit of Zumba with me and things like that really helped me get through. My girlfriend made me some pasta at 10pm, which kept me going.

"I made sure to snack on fruit, mango and dried banana and I even had to dance my way to the toilet. I didn't sit down though, so I wasn't cheating."

Part of his motivation was having seen TV presenter Dermot O'Leary take on the same challenge for Comic Relief in March.

He said: "I was initially only going to dance for 12 hours, but when I saw that Dermot could do it for 24, I thought that I could too. I pushed through and I'm so glad."

The money raised will go to the Adderbury hospice, which provides specialist and end-of-life care for people across Oxfordshire.

Mr Conlan said he chose Katharine House because many of his loved ones had faced cancer.

He said: "My grandfather died of lung cancer when I was eight months old and places like Katharine House help so many people who suffer."

To make a donation, visit justgiving.com/Jordan-Conlan/

Thousands turn out for opening of store

THOUSANDS of residents, and some four-legged friends, turned out for the opening of the new Countrywide store in Banbury.

The store at Banbury Cross Retail Park in Lockheed Close, opened its doors on Saturday with a speech from the new Mayor of Banbury and representatives from Dogs for the Disabled, the company's chosen charity.

Visitors enjoyed face painting, spin the wheel and refreshments as well as free advice from Countrywide's pet and equestrian specialists.

Banbury Mayor Tony Mepham said: "This new store is a sign of excellent things to come in Banbury and is testament to the thriving community and local economy. It's absolutely fantastic to welcome a brand as big as Countrywide to the town and I've no doubt that the store will be a big hit with the local residents."

The store will create 15 new jobs and sells country lifestyle goods, including animal care, garden machinery, footwear and clothing. Belle from Dogs for the Disabled opened the store with Amelia Shepherd, four.

Police watchdog to examine murder inquiry

THE former chief of Thames Valley Police could be questioned as part of an investigation into whether police covered up information about the murder of Stephen Lawrence.

Police watchdog the Independent Police Complaints Commission is examining whether senior police officers failed to provide "full, frank and truthful" information to the inquiry more than 15 years ago.

Sara Thornton, who stepped down in April, is reported to be one of the first people up for questioning.

Now chairwoman of National Police Chiefs' Council, Ms Thornton was part of the Metropolitan Police's Lawrence Review Team in 1997.

Mr Lawrence was stabbed to death when he was 18 in an unprovoked racist attack in south east London, on April 22, 1993.

Screen smashed

BANBURY: A man has been jailed after admitting smashing a car windscreen by jumping on it, and possessing a knife.

The Renault Megane was damaged at 1.45am on November 29, in Newlands Road. Tomas McLaughlin, 23, of Bretch Hill, was jailed for 12 weeks and ordered to pay £150 compensation.

Edward Kirby, 29, of no fixed address, admitted possessing a Class-A drug and a racially aggravated public order offence and was convicted of criminal damage. His three-month sentence was suspended for 18 months. He was fined £50 and told to pay £400 compensation and £750 costs.

Tribute goes viral

OXON: A tribute to blues legend BB King, recorded by a 10-year-old in a tiger onesie, has been viewed more than five million times. Toby Lee, of Bloxham, posted the Facebook video in April, after the musician was taken ill. The 89-year-old died on May 14.

Managing canals

OXON: The former manager of the Olympic Park's Orbit tower, Vicky Martin, has been put in charge of canals in the South East, including the Oxford Canal.

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Woman in crash

BANBURY: A woman, 73, was admitted to hospital after being involved in a collision with a Land Rover Discovery at Banbury Cross Retail Park, Lockheed Close, on Bank Holiday Monday.

She was walking to her car near Poundland at about 11.30am, when she was in a collision with the grey Discovery, which was turning right at a junction.

Police spokeswoman Connie Primmer said the woman was taken to the Horton Hospital with "serious injuries".

PC Russ Mizon said: "We are appealing for witnesses. Due to it being a Bank Holiday, the retail park would have been very busy. Please get in contact via 101."

Family may sue

N OXON: The family of a Formula One test driver who died in 2013 are considering suing the Banbury-based Marussia team.

Maria De Villotta lost her right eye at Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire while testing in 2012. She was cleared to drive again in 2013, but died the following October.

Last Tuesday, the Health and Safety Executive said it would take no action against Marussia for the crash, but her family said it may try to claim compensation.

The Marussia Technical Centre, in Overthorpe Road, was built in 2011. The firm collapsed with £60m debt last year.

Disability forum

N OXON: A free public forum to raise awareness of disability issues will be held at Bodicote House, near Banbury, on June 17.

Cherwell District Council will host the Disability Forum from 10.45am to 1.30pm. Speakers will address the public, provide guidance on NHS services and answer questions.

Councillor Barry Wood said: "The event provides a unique opportunity to bring together a variety of people who all have a different understanding and perspective of issues."

To attend, call 01295 221575.

Wildlife festival

OXON: The Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust wants people to enjoy 30 Days Wild in June, with a festival of wildlife urging them to make room for nature in their lives.

The trust will send 101 suggested Random Acts of Wildness to anyone who signs up on its website.

'Outstanding' nursery receives Ofsted report

Julia Neal reading with Rhys Widdicombe, back, and, left to right, Joe Widdicombe, Amelia Mulley and Seb Andreas

Sophie Mogridge
news@oxfordmail.co.uk

CHILDREN and staff at The Ark nursery in Epwell are this week celebrating the "amazing" results of its latest Ofsted inspection report.

Representatives from the Government watchdog body paid a visit to the village nursery, which takes in up to 16 young children at any one time, on April 27.

Overall, provision at the Ark was rated outstanding, which was a grade above its previous official rating, which had been classed good.

Nursery manager Julia Neal said: "I feel so proud. We don't have any governors or a committee, so the staff and I have done it all by ourselves. It's an amazing feeling."

The Ofsted report, which was published on May 16, praised the quality of teaching throughout the nursery, just west of Banbury, reporting that staff provided an "excellent range of high-quality learning experiences for children".

It added that Ark children were highly motivated, eager to explore and developed a curiosity for learning.

The inspectors' report stated: "Children follow their own ideas and learning, without interruption. This supports their strong abilities to solve problems and be independent in the decisions they make."

Mrs Neal, 49, said: "We're not a very big nursery here, and so we all get to know each other, which gives the nursery this family feel."

She also attributed the success of the Ark, which has run for 18 years, to its rural location.

She said: "We've got fantastic links with the local community.If we're teaching the children about farming and animals, we don't just talk about them; we'll go and see them."

The Ofsted report also highlighted the nursery's high calibre of staff, stating the employees managed the nursery effectively, had defined roles and demonstrated good day-to-day organisation.

Mrs Neal said: "We're all level 3 or above in our childcare qualifications and we ensure there is always a high adult-to-child ratio.

"We really get to know our children."

She added: "We've always strived to be outstanding and now that it's happened, I feel like I'm going to burst with pride."

'Excellent' school receives high praise in most recent inspection

A MIXED day and boarding school near Banbury has received high praise from the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI).

In a report published this week, inspectors said that Sibford School, in Sibford Ferris, offered "a well-planned curriculum that is stimulating and of high quality", enabling pupils "from the youngest through to those in the sixth form to make good progress".

The standards achieved in Early Years were described as "excellent" and the quality of teaching as "good with many examples that were excellent".

Curricular and extra-curricular provision was also described as "excellent" and the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils was also "excellent".

Eight ISI representatives visited the school from March 17 to 20. The final report was sent to the school, the Department for Education and Ofsted on Tuesday, May 26.

Head teacher Michael Goodwin said: "We couldn't be happier with the findings, especially as they offer praise right across the board.

"As a school that welcomes students of all abilities from the UK as well as international students, we focus on the development of individual talent, in a diverse community joined together by our Quaker values and ethos.

"Perhaps the statements I am most proud of are those that relate to our pupils. According to the report the personal development of Sibford pupils is "excellent", they demonstrate "excellent cultural understanding" and their behaviour is described as "excellent throughout the school". As a head teacher I don't think I could ask for anything more. I would like to thank our pupils, their parents and our staff for helping to make Sibford School the success it is."

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Arts sales picking up at festival

ORGANISERS of the county's biggest visual arts festival have said times are changing for troubled artists hit hard by the economic crisis.

About 100,000 visitors saw 400 exhibitions during Oxfordshire Artsweeks in May.

Organiser Esther Lafferty said this year was one of the most successful in the event's history and marked the start of better times for artists who have struggled to sell recently.

She said: "It seems to have been a really bright and bubbly year. Lots of new people, visiting lots of new artists, lots of new talent.

"It's nice to think there are people with a little bit more money in their pockets who can spend a little bit more on lovely things for their homes.

Artists welcomed visitors into their homes and studios, as well as venues including schools and galleries. The exhibitions also lined village trails and county streets for the three weeks of the festival.

Mrs Lafferty, 41, of Faringdon, said: "I would say about one third of our regular artists have said that they had the confidence to become a professional artist or move into art more through a career because of Oxfordshire Artsweeks."

Amyalee Hazel and Emma Humphris with their houses, two of the many artists taking part in Oxfordshire Artweeks

Artistic insight at shops

STUDENTS from Banbury and Bicester College brightened up Castle Quay shopping centre with artwork.

Two stalls gave a glimpse of their work during the annual event, called *We're Here Now*. On display was photography, books, and textiles, including clothes made from card.

Creative art and design student Holly Jones, 21, said: "I made some carrots, in response to the pesticide that Oxfordshire had to deal with.They have labels that explain the differences between organic and non-or-

Inquiry planned into care death

THE mother of a man who died in a supported living home has welcomed an inquiry into his death.

Nico Reed, who had cerebral palsy and learning difficulties, died in the Barrantynes home in Chalgrove on August 22, 2012, aged 23. Last December, an inquest ruled he had inhaled his vomit.

Oxfordshire Coroner Darren Salter said it was possible he could have been saved if staff had checked on him more regularly.

His mother Rosi, who lives in Bloxham, said she was relieved that the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) was to launch an inquiry.

On her Justice for Nico blog, she said: "We heard we were not to have a serious case review, but we were instead to have a full independent investigation.

"Partly because of the huge scope and complexity of Nico's case, a serious case review would not have been able to look into everything we raised."

Mrs Reed said she and husband Ian would get a document detailing the scope of the investigation within two weeks and then choose an investigator.

She wrote: "We have been told to expect it to last at least six months and possibly as long as a year.

"This train has only one destination. It is bound for justice."

Mr Reed had been at Penhurst School in Chipping Norton for 17 years before transferring to Barrantynes in 2010, after a county council assessment.

The home was run by Ridgeway Partnerships, which has since been taken over by Southern Health.

Nico Reed needed frequent care checks

At the inquest, coroner Mr Salter said checks on Mr Reed, who was fed through a tube and checked through the night by a carer, may not have been frequent enough.

Mr Reed's care plan recommended checks every 20 minutes, but they may have only been every 30 or 45 minutes.

An OCCG spokesman said: "The CCG has commissioned an independent review into the death.While [it] is taking place, the CCG cannot comment."

Southern Health also said it could not comment at the moment.

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Riverside improvement project set for autumn

Aims to encourage plants and wildlife and create an enjoyable waterside walk

Chairman Colin Clarke with BTC recreation officer Mike Hall and the BBOWT's Neil Clennell and Judith Hartley

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

A WILDLIFE makeover is on the cards for the section of the River Cherwell that passes through Spiceball Park, Banbury.

A joint project, which is being run by the Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust and Banbury Town Council, will seek to open up the riverside area, improve natural habitats for fish, birds and river plants, and create a relaxing space for visitors to get close to nature.

The project is due to begin this autumn. During its first phase, vegetation and trees overshadowing the river will be cleared away, and shallow river banks will be created to encourage more river plants to grow, and help clean the water.

Colin Clarke, the chairman of the council's general services committee, said: "This is an exciting and innovative project that will open up the River Cherwell in one of our most popular parks.

"Walking beside a river,watching birds and butterflies and listening to birdsong, will be enjoyable for everyone."

He added that volunteering opportunities, as well as regular public education events, would be organised in the park.

Work on the River Cherwell will continue with habitat improvements in the Hanwell Brook area, immediately upstream from the town centre park.

Neil Clennell, the wildlife trust's head of conservation and education for the Oxfordshire area, said: "The River Cherwell is an important tributary of the River Thames.

"Improving wildlife habitats through Spiceball Park will increase the river's biodiversity and create an attractive riverside walk."

Clearing, pruning and coppicing the trees will take place in the autumn, when the ground is likely to be dry and firm for contractors' machinery.

Some piles of wood will be left to create habitats for beetles, newts and frogs in the winter months. Other debris will be used to soften the river banks to provide refuges for fish and river insects.

The River Cherwell project is set to start in October, and will finish in March 2016.

County the most innovative in UK

OXFORDSHIRE has been named as the most innovative part of the UK, beating old rivals Cambridge into second place.

County companies were ranked best at researching and creating new products and services by independent research institute the Enterprise Research Centre (ERC). It examined data from 14,000 firms from across Britain, rating their innovation activity from 2010 to 2012.

The report added that part of the reason for Oxfordshire's success was the concentration of high-end manufacturing companies both in the county and in surrounding counties, as well as a focus on research and development at Oxford University and Oxford Brookes.

Oxford computer programmer Peter Bushnell set up an online currency called Feathercoin two years ago, following the trend of other cryptocurrencies. It is now worth more than £2 million.

He said: "I think people who come here end up staying here because of the way that it is tolerant. They come to study here and they end up staying and contributing to our innovative economy."

One firm picked out by the ERC was Perspectum Diagnostics. The New Road firm started as a spin-off from Oxford University and develops software which can be added to MRI scanners to determine whether a person is at risk of liver disease.

In 2013 it was given a £1.2 million grant from Innovate UK to allow it to recruit staff and start large-scale clinical trials at specialist liver centres. It is now seeking funding for a major expansion.

Research project manager Dan Green said: "We're quite proud of the fact that we'll be contributing to the recognition of UK expertise in medical and biotechnology."

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Student Uways Pervez is overjoyed that his 8st weight loss, just nine months after embarking on a healthy eating plan, has allowed him to fulfil his dream of working in the hospital's emergency department

Young slimmer loses eight stone

Student nurse, Uways Pervez, slimmed down to 12st to completely change his life

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

A STUDENT nurse has secured his dream job at the Horton Hospital after dropping from 20 stone to 12 stone in just nine months.

Having lost 8st 1½ lbs – along with 12 inches from his waist measurement – in total, Uways Pervez, from Banbury, said the significant weight loss had completely changed his life.

The 21-year-old added: "It's always been my ambition to work in an A&E department, but at my biggest I worried that I wouldn't be able to keep up, because it's such a fast-paced environment.

"Spending 14-and-a-half hours on my feet [during a nursing shift] was absolutely exhausting.

"I felt really self-conscious about advising patients about their weight, because I knew I wasn't a healthy weight myself and thought they'd think I was a hypocrite."

Mr Pervez says he had always had a tendency to be bigger than other people of his age, but that he then gained more weight once he started studying nursing at Oxford Brookes University in 2012.

He said: "I lived off takeaways and felt I didn't have time to exercise, so the weight soon piled on."

Mr Pervez would regularly eat pancakes or croissants, washed down with a large mug of tea sweetened by two or three spoons of sugar, for his breakfast, followed by pre-packed sandwiches, crisps, a chocolate bar and a Coca-Cola for lunch.

Then he would have a takeaway pizza for dinner, in addition to snacking on chocolates, biscuits and cakes.

After visiting his GP for advice, Mr Pervez discovered he had high blood pressure and was given vouchers for 12 weeks of support at a local weight loss group.

After the first visit, on August 4 last year, he began following a healthy eating plan devised for him by Slimming World. He said he had been surprised by how easy he found it to fit the new healthy eating regime into his busy working routine.

He said: "The most important thing for me has been planning ahead.

"Now I'll always make sure I've got something waiting for me in the fridge, for when I get home from a shift, so that I'm not tempted to have junk food or order a takeaway."

Now on his daily menu, Mr Pervez will usually have a home-made omelette with baked beans and mushrooms for breakfast, followed by a mid-morning snack of fresh fruit.

For lunch, Mr Pervez will eat as meal such as a chicken salad, then top up with fresh fruit and a Diet Coke during the afternoon.

For dinner, he will have another healthy meal, such as oven-baked salmon with roasted vegetables, all while snacking on fresh fruit, crispbreads and small chocolate bars during the day.

Mr Pervez is looking forward to starting work at the emergency department at Horton General Hospital in September.

History is brought to life at event

VISITORS to Upton House, near Banbury, stepped into an era of rationing, air raids and national service during a 1940s weekend.

The property, now in the hands of the National Trust, underwent a transformation at the outbreak of the Second World War.

Its owners, Lord and Lady Bearsted, moved into The Dorchester Hotel in London when the conflict started, while their bank was evacuated to the rural retreat of Upton House.

M Samuel and Co, plus all of its staff were based in the stately home for the duration of the war.

Home Guard Brian Clayton

In a recreation of that historical home-swap, the 1940s weekend saw Upton temporarily return to its wartime state last weekend.

Two Home Guard groups camped on site and the soldiers from those Dad's Army units gave marching displays to visitors, stripped down their guns and helped young participants to understand what had happened during the war and what life had been like for those living in the countryside.

Volunteers taking on the duties of Air Raid Precautions (ARP) wardens discussed the role the service had played on the Home Front during the war and women playing the part of Land Army girls were also at the property throughout the retrospective weekend.

More must be done to keep children safe

CHILDREN should have lessons on sexual exploitation after the Operation Bullfinch scandal in Oxfordshire, a leading charity has said.

Sex education in schools should be expanded to include exploitation and abuse, Barnardo's said.

Seven men were jailed for a total of 95 years in 2013, after Operation Bullfinch investigated grooming, abusing and prostituting six young girls, mainly in East Oxford.

Sex and healthy relationship education is compulsory from age 11 in state schools, but the charity wants teachers to receive specialist training on exploitation. It has recorded a 50 per cent rise in 2014-15 in the number of sexually exploited and at-risk children it helped, at 3,175 up from 2,118 the previous year.

Chief executive Javed Khan said: "The new Government in Westminster must work with the local authorities, police, schools and parents across England to help keep young people safe and bring their abusers to justice."

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Cadets hike for funds to pay rent and costs

The sponsored walk is the latest in a series of fundraising events for the Sea Cadets who need £3,000 to cover expenses

About 30 young members of the Banbury Sea Cadets as well as parents and people in the community are taking on a sponsored 10-mile Banbury walk

The walk went along the canalside

Hannah Somerville
hsomerville@nqo.com

FUNDRAISING efforts for the Banbury Sea Cadets have been continuing as members took on a sponsored walk.

About 30 cadets, along with friends and family, embarked on a 10-mile hike around the edge of the town on Monday to raise money for the organisation.

Banbury Sea Cadets has been running for more than 60 years but needs to raise about £3,000 to cover rent and running costs.

Walker Hayley Campbell, 19, has been involved with the organisation for seven years, beginning as a cadet and going on to become an instructor after she turned 18.

She said: "My feet are blistered but it went really well. I don't think anyone had done any training for it but no one slowed down or stopped.

"My parents are in the army. The Sea Cadets is everything to me, pretty much. It saved me as a child; I went because you got lifelong friends from it. It's life skills you just don't get anywhere else."

Kings Sutton resident Zoe Lewis, whose 10-year-old daughter Melissa joined last year, has founded a fundraising group, Friends of Banbury Sea Cadets.

It now has 50 members on Facebook and was responsible for the walk. The amount of money raised will be announced soon.

Mrs Lewis said: "Everything is going well so far. We are really pleased with the amount of support.

"But we're still looking for a sponsor. We are a small group and we can't do everything."

Ahead of the walk, the Friends of Banbury Sea Cadets have been selling specially-designed T-shirts online, with all proceeds going straight to the unit.

Cadets have also been packing bags at Morrisons, in Swan Close Road, and local branches of Marks & Spencer to raise extra cash. A recent bag-packing session at M&S raised £570 over the course of the day.

An 'awareness day' in the Castle Quay shopping centre is planned for late September.

Crime survey for rural areas

PEOPLE who live and work in the Oxfordshire countryside are being encouraged to take part in the National Crime Poll.

Police want to find out how to improve their service to rural communities in the largest ever crime and anti-social behaviour in rural areas survey, the National Rural Crime Network said.

Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner Anthony Stansfeld, a member of the network, said: "Tackling rural crime remains one of my main priorities and I fully support this survey which not only aims to find out more about the crimes which affect our rural economy but will also help us build a picture of crime and policing generally in our rural areas."

It comes as insurance firm NFU Mutual reported that Oxfordshire bucked the national trend with a drop in rural theft last year, with a 32 per cent decrease in the value of goods stolen, from £1m to £680,000.

Visit nationalruralcrimenetwork.net/survey?member=TVP

Costs to stay put in scheme

CHARGING policies at Oxfordshire County Council's park-and-ride sites are unlikely to be lowered, despite claims they have harmed business, its leader has said.

Ian Hudspeth said without another source of funding to make up for the cost of lower fees, a change would not be proposed.

A £2-a-day parking charge was introduced in November 2013 at Water Eaton and Thornhill, on top of the £2.70 bus return fare.

It brought the council's park-and-rides into line with those of Oxford City Council at Pear Tree, Seacourt and Redbridge.

Residents have complained that commuters are parking on their streets and now business organisation ROX has claimed it has put people off going into Oxford

Mr Hudspeth said: "The difficulty is where the funding has to come from. You would need cover the cost of making it free, or charging less."

Careers help for parents

A SERIES of free events at City of Oxford College and Banbury and Bicester College will advise the parents of teenagers making decisions about their future.

Oxford-based educational group Activate Learning are organising the "What Next After GCSEs?" events to bring together experts in further and higher education, careers advisors and employers.

Sessions will be led by representatives from Oxford Brookes University, charity Adviza and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

Sally Dicketts, of Activate Learning, said: "Young people have limited access to careers advice, so parents often have to fill the gap."

The City of Oxford event is on June 10 and at Banbury and Bicester on June 24, 6pm to 8pm.

Places are limited. To book visit activatelearning.ac.uk/whatnext.

Council encourages firms to join its good traders scheme

OXFORDSHIRE businesses have been encouraged to sign up for a scheme to tackle cowboy traders.

Oxfordshire County Council wants more businesses to become part of the Buy With Confidence Scheme.

It claims those which have already signed up have seen a 10 per cent growth in trade.

The scheme was set up six years ago and now includes information about 100 firms in the county.

It is designed to allow customers to access the details of trustworthy and reliable home improvement businesses.

In order to take part, firms must commit to trading fairly and doing a good job.

One company which joined the scheme was P&R Roofing from Horspath.

Owner Paul Hackett said: "Unlike other trader recommendation websites, the Buy With Confidence scheme requires very thorough background checks and is the only one that is trading standards approved."

Housing development plans for next 15 years negotiated

A BLUEPRINT for development in Cherwell over the next 15 years is in the final stages. Cherwell District Council's Local Plan submission makes provision for 22,800 homes by 2031, to hit government targets.

The document is also seen as a test case by other councils in Oxfordshire, because it is the first to be put forward since the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in March 2014.

The SHMA, commissioned by Oxfordshire's biggest councils, identified a need for 100,000 more homes by 2031 but countryside campaigners dispute that number.

Cherwell District Council's Local Plan proposals include 6,050 more homes than proposed last June after planning inspector Nigel Payne halted the first examination and said the council needed to take into account the SHMA figures.

District council spokesman Tony Ecclestone said since the second examination in December, Mr Payne's response had been received and was being fact-checked.

I Spy with my little eye...an hilarious espionage spoof

SPY (15, 120 mins)
A comedy/action/thriller/romance, starring Melissa McCarthy, Jude Law, Jason Statham, Rose Byrne, Miranda Hart, Allison Janney, Bobby Cannavale, 50 Cent. Director: Paul Feig.

OSCAR-nominated actress Melissa McCarthy reunites with *Bridesmaids* writer-director Paul Feig for an action-packed mission which would leave James Bond decidedly shaken and stirred by its unorthodox approach to 21st-century espionage.

Punctuated by thrilling chases and a frenetic knife fight in a restaurant kitchen, *Spy* is a terrifically entertaining caper, jam-packed with belly laughs and foul-mouthed outbursts.

The high jinks are underpinned by another winning performance from McCarthy as a deskbound analyst at the CIA, who is championed for her moist homemade cakes rather than her sharp intellect.

Brains arm-wrestles brawn in Feig's politically incorrect and uproarious script, including an amusing cameo from rapper 50 Cent as himself and a juicy supporting role for Miranda Hart.

While the leading lady proves her doubters wrong in the name of world peace, Jason Statham lampoons his tough guy screen image as a CIA operative who was clearly at the shallow end of the gene pool when they were doling out intelligence.

One wordy scene – perhaps the most dialogue Statham has ever delivered in a single take – is a particular highlight.

Suave secret agent Bradley Fine (Jude Law) completes some of the agency's most dangerous missions thanks to the quick-thinking and hi-tech gadgetry of analyst Susan Cooper (McCarthy).

He takes all of the acclaim while Susan remains firmly in the background haunted by her controlling mother's mangled mantra: "Well-behaved women do make history".

When Bradley and the other agents, including British bruiser Rick Ford (Statham), are compromised, Susan puts herself forward for active duty to infiltrate the inner circle of arms dealer Rayna Boyanov (Rose Byrne).

CIA deputy director Elaine Crocker (Allison Janney) places her trust in Susan to complete the perilous mission without any field experience.

"Track and report only," instructs Elaine.

Guided by her dithering colleague Nancy Artingstall (Hart), Susan adopts a series of dowdy disguises to get close to Rayna without arousing suspicion.

"I look like someone's homophobic aunt," remarks Susan about one of her fake personas.

As Rayna prepares to sell a stolen device to Sergio De Luca (Bobby Cannavale), Susan throws caution to the wind to avert global disaster.

Opening with an extended action sequence and Saul Bass-inspired opening titles replete with a Bond-esque thunderous ballad, *Spy* is a rip-roaring treat.

McCarthy throws herself into her role with gusto, mixing steeliness with lovability as she battles armed henchmen, speeds after a target on a scooter and tries to stop a bad guy from escaping in his helicopter.

Hart essentially plays herself, but she's a snug fit amidst a strong Anglo-American cast.

They deliver Feig's zinging one-liners with tongues wedged so firmly in cheeks it's something of a wonder they don't burst through to the outside.

The spirit of 007 pervades every glossy frame. But old-school chauvinism is turned on its head to affirm a message of girl power and independence.

Bridesmaids star Melissa McCarthy goes undercover in her new comedy action film *Spy*, where she plays a secret agent who has to leave her safe office post and head out into the field on a dangerous assignment when members of the US intelligence agency's usual espionage team have their covers blown and new anonymous faces are needed in the campaign to thwart the nation's enemy

Cake Bookworm

War Of The Encyclopaedists by Christopher Robinson and Gavin Covite is published in hardback by Hamish Hamilton, priced £16.99 (ebook £9.99)

This novel tells the story of best friends Hal and Mickey, and their war is the first Iraq conflict of 2004. Hal and Mickey are founders of the Encyclopaedists of Capital Hill, a tongue-in-cheek arts collective which puts on pop-up exhibitions largely as a means of picking up women. Their boho slacker lifestyle is disrupted when, instead of moving to Boston to college, Mickey's National Guard unit is called to serve in Iraq.
The narrative splits, with despatches from Iraq alternating with Hal failing to get on at college. The pair also take turns to update a Wikipedia page about their lives as a way of extending their arts project. Often compelling read, if a little meandering.

The Followers by Rebecca Wait is published in hardback by Picador, price £12.99 (ebook £7.59)

If you're looking for a summer read, this is perfect. Following a successful debut novel, The View On The Way Down, The Followers is about family and a child, Judith, observing the actions of a parent, yet being helpless to stop them. Alternating between the present, where an adult Judith endures awkward meetings with her inmate mother, and 'before', depicting childhood, the story of Stephanie's imprisonment is unravelled. After meeting the charismatic Nathaniel in the cafe where she works, the single mother is recruited to a simple life in a remote farmhouse as part of a tiny community. Tensions rise within the tight-knit group, climaxing in a disturbing act of violence that explains the present. A deftly written, compelling, and accessible.

The Slaughter Man by Tony Parsons is published in hardback by Century, priced £12.99 (ebook £6.17)

It's New Year's Eve in London and while most people are out celebrating, a wealthy couple and two of their children are murdered in their home. The unusual murder weapon – a gun used for stunning cattle before they're slaughtered – points to a killer nicknamed the Slaughter Man who, 30 years ago, dispatched his girlfriend's father and brothers in the same way. He's out of prison now, but dying of cancer. Could he really be responsible? Is there a copy-cat killer on the loose? Or is someone trying to frame him? DC Max Wolfe is on the case. Parsons deftly weaves together the various plot strands and, for the most part, the story is fast-paced and gripping, but his compulsion to explain police jargon and acronym is stilted, clumsy and impedes the narrative.

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Strikes may be off

OXON: Rail disruptions across Oxfordshire could be called off as planned rail strikes are suspended amid union talks.

Rail staff could be in line for a two per cent pay rise. RMT transport union members had planned to walk out from 5pm on Thursday and again the following week, affecting services through Oxford.

Both strikes have now been suspended as staff assess the offer and an assurance of no compulsory redundancies. RMT will decide whether to call off the strikes.

Recall good times

OXON: People with dementia are being helped to bring back fond memories with Age UK asking them to make use of reminiscence boxes in county libraries.

The 16 boxes contain 10 to 15 items, mainly picture books, on themes like childhood, fashion, gardening and history. Some include DVDs, music CDS and pictures. Items can help start conversation to support memory skills.

Calling tin rattlers

BANBURY: Volunteers aged over 18 are sought for collection days in aid of Katharine House Hospice.

The Adderbury-based hospice is holding events at Banbury Morrison's, Swan Close Road, on June 18 and 19, and in Chipping Norton town centre on June 24.

Each collection is from 9am to 5pm but people are only asked to hold a tin for an hour and a half. Call 01295 816484.

Police and fire to move in together

Emergency service staff could soon share building under new cost-saving plan

Matt Oliver
moliver@nqo.com

POLICE and fire service staff could share buildings in new plans put forward for "blue light" services in the county.

Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service, part of Oxfordshire County Council, proposed the move as a new way to save cash.

Last year it planned to make £700,000 of savings up to 2018 and in February this year it was budgeted to make an extra £908,000.

Thames Valley Police also faces savings of almost £22m by 2018.

And in a report to deputy council leader Rodney Rose, chief fire officer Dave Etheridge said meetings had been held with senior police officials about the two services sharing buildings.

The proposal could see the fire service and police force either move into each other's existing buildings, or new ones built as "multi-agency hubs".

As reported in the *Banbury Cake* earlier this year, one such building is planned in Carterton, where fire crews are to share a base with ambulance and police staff.

Commissioner Anthony Stansfield

But council deputy leader Mr Rose, whose responsibilities include the fire service, confirmed that the new proposals would see a wider agreement reached between the fire and police services.

He said both organisations were reviewing their properties and would be looking to share space where possible if it saved money.

Mr Rose added: "We should be looking at where we can co-locate. An example is what we are doing in Carterton. We also need to ask: do we need a new building or can we actually use one that is there already?

"It is about getting people the best value for money."

Anthony Stansfeld, police and crime commissioner for Thames Valley, has backed the move.

He said: "Working effectively with partner organisations plays a significant part in improving performance and decreasing costs.

"With continued cuts in public sector spending it is more important than ever that all public sector bodies investigate cost-saving options and work collaboratively with their partners.

"As the police and crime commissioner I have been working closely with the chief constable to consider the potential benefits of collaborative opportunities with partners and have met with the Fire and Rescue Service to initially discuss this."

At a meeting on Monday, Mr Rose will be asked to sign the memorandum of understanding drawn up by the police and fire services and be asked to approve a memorandum which commits the fire service to closer working with its Thames Valley Fire Control Service partners.

The meeting is at 10am in County Hall, New Road, Oxford.

M40 crashes rise gets investigated

ACCIDENT numbers creeping up on a stretch of motorway have sparked a Government review of the route.

Between January 2013 and April 2015, there were 432 crashes on the M40, which has five junctions between Thame and Banbury.

But Highways England said the number of crashes between Junction 8a, Oxford, and Junction 10, Cherwell Valley Services, was steadily on the increase – going against the trend for the rest of the route.

Roads experts will nowlook at what has caused the rise along that stretch.

Spokeswoman Sarah Silk said: "We have noticed a slight increase in incidents between Junction 8a and 10 recently, and we are carrying out a further look at the causes of these incidents to see if there are any changes we can make that will have a worthwhile safety benefit."

Almost half of all Oxfordshire M40 crashes were on the stretch between Junction 9, Bicester, and 10, with 78 crashes in 2013, 94 in 2014, and 30 so far in 2015.

Another 40 per cent since the start of 2013 were between Junction 10 and 11, Banbury.

Along that route, there were 79 in 2013, 72 in 2014 and 24 so far in 2015. By contrast the stretch between Junction 8 and 9 saw just 10 accidents in the 28-month period.

Ms Silk said the overall trend was that crashes on the M40 had gone down.

She added: "Safety is Highways England's top priority and we regularly monitor safety between Junctions 6 and 12, as we do everywhere on our network."

In February, 33 vehicles were involved in a crash between Junction 9 and 10, which killed a 65-year-old and injured more than 30 other people, 24 years to the day after a teacher from Oxford Brookes was killed in a 101-car pileup.

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Oxfordshire Listings

Events

THURSDAY

Photos show: While They're Away. Photography by James Sutton: Museum of Oxford, St Aldates. Photographs of the new First World War play by Jeremy Allen. 10am. Free. 01865 252334.

Volunteer Fair: Market Place, Banbury. In celebration of National Volunteers' Week, inviting people to volunteer and for organisations. Contact info: Sheila, 03003 030126 or info@volunteerconnect.org.uk. 9am. 03003 030126.

Billi Smiles Circus: Self Pick, Broughton Road. A fairy tale for the whole family, with circus acts. Juggling witches, a pirate on the Wheel of Death, and a handsome prince. 3pm and 7pm. Tickets from £5. Details at billismilescircus.com or 07832 425262. Onsite box office open 10am to 8pm daily.

Canaletto: Celebrating Britain, Compton Verney. Paintings and drawings that Canaletto created between 1746 and 1755, celebrating achievements of British architecture and engineering. 11am. Adults £15, concessions £13.50, family £30. 01926 645 500.

Festival of Nature: Join Wildlife Trust for two weeks of wildlife activities, June 1-14. Bug Hotel Making: Florence Park, Cornwallis Road, 11am to 3pm; The Beauty in the Beast talk by Hugh Warwick: Main Hall, NOA Community Centre, Diamond Place, Oxford. Booking required bbowt.org.uk/whats-on. 7pm. £3. 01865 788300.

Great British Drawings: Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street, Oxford. More than 100 of the museum's best examples. 10am. £7 full price / £6 concessions. 01865 278 000.

Seventies snaps: The Non-Conformists: Photographs by Martin Parr: Compton Verney, Warwick. Black-and-white photographs from the mid-1970s, documenting the Yorkshire mill town of Hebden Bridge and the Calder Valley. 11am. Adults £15, concessions £13.50, family £30. 01926 645 500.

FRIDAY

Photo show: While They're Away. Photography by James Sutton: Museum of Oxford, St Aldates, Oxford. 10am. Free. 01865 252334.

Billi Smiles Circus: Self Pick, Broughton Road, Banbury. 3pm and 7pm. From £5. 07832425262.

Festival of Nature: Oxford Museum of Natural History, Parks Road, Oxford. Night-time Safari: Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre. Discover what amazing animals come out at night. Booking required bbowt.org.uk/whats-on. Sturdy footwear essential. 7.30pm. £3. 01865 788 300; Shotover Bat Walk: Shotover Country Park, Old Road. Join Shotover Wildlife group, Oxford Bat Group and Oxfordshire Mammal Group for a dusk walk. Booking required. Children need to be accompanied. 8pm. Free. 01865 788 300.

Seventies snaps: The Non-Conformists: Photographs by Martin Parr: Compton Verney, Warwick. 11am. 01926 645 500.

SATURDAY

Photo show: While They're Away. Photography, museum of Oxford, St Aldates. Free.

Bicester & Kidlington Ramblers: Chalford Green, between Chipping Norton and Spelsbury. Park on B4026 Park at roadside. Leisurely 10-mile circular walk. Picnic lunch. Dogs on leads. Lionel Howse, 01869 601442. 10am.

Billi Smiles Circus: Self Pick, Broughton Road, Banbury. 2pm and 5pm; Tickets from £5.00. See billismilescircus.com or 07832 425262.

Canaletto: Celebrating Britain, Compton Verney, Warwick, Warwickshire. 01926 645500.

Open gardens: Nine Chinnor private gardens open June 6 and 7. £5 for weekend ticket. Other events free. Allotments, schools open. Plant sale, refreshments on Saturday. St Andrew's Church will be decorated with the theme of A Symphony of Flowers, serving cream teas both days. Estover Way wildlife area open Sunday. Green Fair on Sunday in the Village Hall. Bike exchange, plant and craft stalls. From 2pm. 07761 582 937.

Scarecrow trail: East Hagbourne, all village roads, East Hagbourne. Buy a map at the Village Shop or Fleur Pub. Tea and cakes at St Andrew's Church 3pm-5pm. 10am. The trail is free; a map costs £1. 01235 813393.

Festival of Nature: Oxford Museum of Natural History, Parks Road: Otter walk (& crayfish trap setting): South Lodge of the University Parks, William Baker House, Broad Street. Meeting place: South Lodge of the University Parks at the corner of South Parks Road and St Cross Road. Booking required via bbowt.org.uk/whats-on. 7.30pm. Free, 01865 788 300; Wildlife Storytelling at Waterstones, William Baker House, Broad Street. Author Zoe Greaves tells tales inspired by local wildlife. 2.00pm, free, 01865 788 300; Mammal Detectives at Wytham Woods: Explore Wytham Woods with Oxfordshire Mammal Group, looking for signs of badgers, deer and small mammals with the help of researchers from Oxford University. Bring a picnic lunch. 10am. Free; Phoenix Kids Film Club, Finding Nemo: Phoenix Picture House, Oxford. Book at ticketing.picturehouses.com or 0871 902 5736. 10.30am. £4.

Open gardens: National Garden Scheme opening at Blenheim Palace, Woodstock. Wheelchair access. Dogs on leads in park only. Homemade teas. Coaches welcome. See website. 9am. £4.

Village fete: Overthorpe and Warkworth. The Manor, Main Street, Overthorpe. Traditional garden fete. 2pm. Fun stalls, games, cakes and crafts. £1. 01295 710515.

Oxford Art Prize: 03 Gallery, Oxford Castle Quarter. New open art competition. Bring your sketchbook, paper, boards and canvases to a previously allocated location and work 'en plein air' creating a flurry of visible artistic activity across the city. Entries will be exhibited at the O3 Gallery and Town Hall Gallery. Times subject to change. 9am. Free. 01865 246131.

SUNDAY

Billi Smiles Circus: Self Pick, Broughton Road, Banbury. Tickets from £5.00. For details see billismilescircus.com or 07832 425262; 7pm.

Open gardens: Volunteer garden team's open garden day: Katharine House Hospice, Adderbury. With Adderbury & District WI's grow with wild seeds from KewRoyal Botanic Gardens. 2pm. £2.50 (children free). 07800 721432.

To get an event of any kind listed here, enter the details into our easy-to-use online database at thisisoxfordshire.co.uk/events

Please add your event no later than ten days before the day of publication.

Open gardens: National Gardens Scheme, Steeple Aston Gardens, Various streets. Steeple Aston, often considered the most easterly of the Cotswold villages, is a beautiful village with gardens that provide a huge range of interest. A stream meanders down the hill as the landscape changes from sand to clay. The seven open gardens include cottage gardens, large landscaped gardens, natural wooded areas, ponds and bog gardens, themed borders. No wheelchair access at Primrose Gardens or Touchwood. Dogs on leads. Plant sale. Homemade teas. Primrose Gardens also open to visitors by appt. May to July. Please call beforehand. 1.00pm. Combined Adm £5; chd free. 01869 340512.

MONDAY

Open gardens: National Gardens Scheme, Home Farm, Middle Lane, Balscote. Formerly a plant lover's garden, now redesigned as low maintenance with flowering shrubs, mature trees and poetry. A unique Balscote-sur-Mer theme adds a touch of humour, with lovely views of surrounding countryside. Poetry in the garden by artist and writer Zizi Lagadec.

TUESDAY

Open gardens: National Gardens Scheme: Home Farm, Middle Lane, Balscote. See Monday.

Comedy

THURSDAY

Dark laughs: Arthur and Esther: Old Fire Station, Oxford. UK premiere of Ross Howard's dark comedy. What happens when your wife leaves you for your best friend and your beloved library is closed? Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. Tickets ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 7pm. £10, concessions £8.

Fringe show: Mike Wozniak: One Man Dad Cat Band: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Preview. A new tale from this Fosters Edinburgh Comedy Award Nominee 2013. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 8pm. £7, £6 concessions. 01865 305305.

Single act: Phone Whore (a one-act play with frequent interruptions): Old Fire Station, Oxford. Truth and taboo collide in this intimate visit with a phone sex operator. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 9.50pm. £8, £7 concessions.

FRIDAY

Comedian's campaign: Andrew Watts: Feminism for Chaps: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Andrew Watts explores how chaps like him can change the world. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 8pm. £7, £6 concessions.

Dark laughs: Arthur and Esther: Old Fire Station, Oxford. ticketsoxford.com. 7pm. £10, concessions £8.

Bard reworked: As You Psyche It: Old Fire Station Oxford. Foregone Confusion are back with another bad pun; and this time it's Shakespearean. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 9pm. £8, £6 concessions.

SATURDAY

One man show: Chris Fitchew: Ooops!: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Tour-de-force new one-man show, recounting a journey from Derby to London and back. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 9.30pm. £7, £6 concessions.

Theatre

THURSDAY

Fringe show: Dark Mirror: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Four short plays by Paul Ekert, presenting a darkly comic viewpoint of what it is to be human. From the tragic to the comedic in the debut of OAGRE, Oxford Arts Group's theatrical projects venture. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 8.30pm. £8, £6 concessions.

Pullman class: His Dark Materials: Part II: O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College, Entrance on Blackhall Road, Oxford. Join the adventure in the stand-alone final instalment of Pullman's fantasy novels, as two children travel between parallel worlds. hisdarkmaterialsoxford.com. 7.30pm. £10 adult / £8 student.

FRIDAY

Fringe show: Dark Mirror: Old Fire Station, Oxford. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 8.30pm. £8, £6 concessions.

Pullman class: His Dark Materials: Part II: O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College. hisdarkmaterialsoxford.com. 7.30pm. £10 adult / £8 student.

SATURDAY

Cookery theatrics: Connie's Colander: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Connie is a retired domestic science teacher. Emily, her daughter, is enjoying hosting her first TV cookery show: We witness their relationship evolving and see the impact Alzheimer's has. Book a free ticket, then pay what you think it's worth afterwards. SatMatCo is a 'no frills' theatre company, producing one hour lunchtime drama. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 12.30pm.

Fringe show: Dark Mirror: Old Fire Station, Oxford. ticketsoxford.com. 6.30pm. £8, £6 concessions. 01865 305305.

Pullman Class: His Dark Materials: Part II: O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College. 7.30pm. £10 adult / £8 student.

Magic turn: Morgan & West's Utterly Spiffing Spectacular Magic Show For Kids and Childish Grown-ups!: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Time travelling Victorian magic duo unload another boxful of bafflement. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 2pm. £8, £7 concessions, £6 children.

Fringe show: Pond Wife: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305.

Music

THURSDAY

Opera classic: La Traviata: Oxford Playhouse, Beaumont Street. New orchestration for piano, clarinet and cello by Harry Blake. New English version by Robin Norton-Hale. Co-production with OperaUpClose, Malmo Opera House and The Belgrade Theatre Coventry. 7.30pm. £11-£22. 01865 305305.

FRIDAY

Opera classic: La Traviata: Oxford Playhouse. 7.30pm. 01865 305305

Jazz Age: Swingin' against the Bomb: Friends Meeting House, St Giles. Oxford Classic Jazz Band benefit concert for Oxford CND, performing original songs, rags and hot numbers from the Jazz Age. 7.00pm. £12/£8. 01865 242919.

Folk pairing: Sylvia Barnes and Sandy Stanage: The White House, Abingdon Road. Oxford Folk Club. 8.30pm. £6. 01865 768128.

SATURDAY

Anniversary tribute: Centenary concert: St Columba's Church, Alfred Street. Music and readings for a summer's evening. A varied programme of poetry readings, instrumental and vocal items with guest artist Olivia Clarke – soprano. In aid of St Columba's Centenary fund. 7.30pm. £12, £10 concessions. 01865 803569.

Fundraising choir: Charity Concert, The Cotswold Choir: St Edburg's Church, Bicester. A 50-strong choir with popular songs. Proceeds to Oxford Children's Hospital and St Edburg's Church. 7pm. Tickets £10 (admission on the door £12 – U18 £3). 01869 249555.

Poetic jazz: Julia Biel: The North Wall Arts Centre, Summertown. Award-winning singer, songwriter, and multi-instrumentalist Julia Biel blends vocals reminiscent of the greats of jazz's golden age with a poetic yet conversational lyrical style. 8pm. £13 (concessions £11). 01865 319450.

Russian choral: Lyra Choral Ensemble of St Petersburg Concert: All Saints' Church, Sutton Courtenay. The Lyra Choral Ensemble return. The special evening will include a Russian-themed buffet supper and drink (included in ticket price.) 7.30pm. £15. 01235 847489.

Popular classics: Radcliffe Orchestra: Tingewick Hall, John Radcliffe Hospital. Popular Classical Concert with music by Dukas, Tchaikovsky and Holst. Proceeds to Vale House Dementia Care Home. 7.45pm. £10/£8 concessions. 01865 63681.

Chamber in chapel: Sansara Chamber Choir performance: The Queen's College Chapel, Oxford. queens.ox.ac.uk/music/eglesfield-music-society. Sansara Chamber Choir performance. 8pm. Free with a retiring collection. 01865 279120.

Verse and lyrics: Soulmates Unanimous: Live New Departures in poetry, music & song: Old Fire Station, Oxford. Beat & jazz poet Michael Horovitz and singer-lyricist Vanessa Vie perform their own compositions and vocalise texts by William Blake, Emily Dickinson, Lorca, Ginsberg. Part of Oxford Fringe 2015. ticketsoxford.com or 01865 305305. 7.30pm. £12, £9.

Vocal performers: The Beatroots and The Ultrasounds: Old Fire Station. Double dose of a cappella! 8pm. 01865 305305

CakeSport

banburycake.co.uk/sport

Banbury's Tim Paine troops off dejectedly after being caught

Banbury slayed by deadly Doran

Aussie hits brilliant century in Henley win

CRICKET – HCPL

A BRILLIANT century by Australian under 19 captain Jake Doran sent Henley to a five-wicket victory in their Division 1 top-of-the-table clash at Banbury on Saturday.

The clash was dominated by Doran's superb 121 as Henley, chasing a a target of 211 for victory, got home with 17 balls to spare.

Doran, a wicket-keeper/batsman who is seen as a future Test player, outshone his Banbury counterpart Tim Paine, a former Aussie Test star.

Indeed Paine was the first batsman to fall after Henley won the toss and asked Banbury to bat first.

Paine was out for 13, caught off Tahir Afridi, who also accounted for Hugo Darby as Banbury slipped to 34-2.

The Banbury innings was dominated by Lloyd Sabin, who struck 93 of 137 balls with 11 fours.

Richard West was the next top scorer on 20, before he became one of two victims for Gurveer Singh.

Sabin was out in the penultimate over to Afridi, who finished with figures of 5-38 as Banbury were restricted to 210-8.

Henley made a poor start to their innings as Karl Penhale dismissed David Barnes, before Michael Roberts and Matt Rowe departed in quick succession.

But then Doran took charge.

The Aussie struck six sixes and 11 fours in his 121, which came off 108 balls.

He dominated a stand of 131 with Ziafrat Ashraf before falling with Henley in sight of victory.

LATEST TABLE

SERIOUS CRICKET HOME COUNTIES

PREMIER LEAGUE

Division 1

	P	W	D	L	A	B	Pts
Henley	4	4	0	0	0	0	80
H Wycombe	4	4	0	0	0	0	80
Banbury	**4**	**3**	**0**	**1**	**0**	**3**	**66**
Slough	4	2	0	2	0	10	50
Tring Park	4	2	0	2	0	7	47
Reading	4	2	0	5	0	5	45
Burnham	4	1	0	3	0	18	38
Harefield	4	1	0	3	0	18	38
Horspath	4	1	0	3	0	18	38
Oxford	4	0	0	4	0	21	21

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ARIES Mar 21-Apr 19

This week try to give a little space to your close ones who may be feeling stressed over issues you are as yet unaware of. The good news is that your sign holds the power of structure from Sunday, so use your very creative mind to ask the right questions and to think of ways to help them work through their problems. It can make up for last week's lost time! Call now I have more to tell you.

0906 585 4360

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

You start to see ways of getting back on track with close ones. I know you Taurus and I know that the difficult atmosphere which built up in May affected you more than you admitted. Younger faces need your guidance, but choose your words carefully as they will be acting on all you say and advise. New flirtations looking good! Ring now to hear which sign I'd choose for you long term.

0906 585 4361

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

You've had to do a lot of growing up in the last five weeks Gemini and it shows. I'm proud of how far you've come and you should be too. Don't let a past contact stop you from making the most of the week ahead, but ignore them. You're bigger and stronger than that now. New work opportunities come via a social link you make with last minute arrangements. Ring now for a full update.

0906 585 4362

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

You start to see who your real friends are and who has been using you for what you can give to them. You want balance and you won't be stopping until you get it. The home comes under the spotlight from Monday and this would be a really good time for buying, selling and renting of property. You'll get the deal you want if you hold out. Call now to hear why your house of love looks interesting.

0906 585 4363

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

A recent disappointment in your work has left you with wounded pride. Try to pick yourself up and move on Leo. The sooner you show how resilient you are, the sooner the same names will come back and offer you a second chance! Don't be in too much of a hurry to rush your love life, but enjoy the slow pace Venus is offering so you can build something lasting. Call now to reveal all.

0906 585 4364

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

A great week to kick bad habits and to get yourself back into shape. You've wanted to make changes for some time now but other people's pressures saw you lacking any real motivation. Happy times link to events you attend which celebrate other's good news. A misunderstanding at work must be played down for reasons you'll discover on Thursday. Call now for a message from Venus.

0906 585 4365

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

Links to far away places or people with foreign names bring luck and opportunity. Try not to second guess the next move of new faces in business or you could be left feeling red faced. Working as a team is your key to success in the days ahead, especially if you're willing to roll with sudden decisions and changes. Ring now to reveal your true calling.

0906 585 4366

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

It would be worth your while going over your finances with a fine tooth comb this week. You'll see with clarity where you've been wasting money and how you can save it. Mercury brings communication difficulties with family and you may be best to let older people have their way until the stars let them see sense on Thursday. Ring now to hear how travel is coming up via work.

0906 585 4367

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

Although you've had a lot of pressures in the workplace, you've done an admirable job of handling them. Those with power have noticed this and over the coming days you get to see what opportunities your hard work can offer to you. Use your ruling planet Jupiter to sort out that stressful home matter. Others will be agreeable to what you want now. Ring now for the full story.

0906 585 4368

CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

You can't seem to get a certain person off your mind and you may even find it affects your work and day to day duties. When are you going to lay your cards on the table and admit what you want? Close ones have already guessed how you feel before you have! News of births and pregnancies makes you question where your loyalties should lie. Ring now so I can explain this fully.

0906 585 4369

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Jealousy is rife in your chart and you may be finding it hard to know who is telling the truth and who has been feeding you lies. The Moon brings clarity on Sunday and you can trust your instincts and your feelings, so matters may well be brought to a very dramatic head. Travel plans you lay at this time show you how much your loyalty lies with a certain person now. Geminis help you achieve what you want in your career. Ring now to hear how that stoical phase is over!

0906 585 4370

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 20

Mars brings out your naughty side and you start to push close ones for affect. Are you playing with fire? You know you are but you can't seem to stop yourself. Know how far is too far to go Pisces. Changes which occur in the workplace force your hand and help you make a decision which will change the course of your future. Ring my starline now for a message from Uranus.

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4 BUSINESS

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6 HOLIDAYS

7 EDUCATION

8 PUBLIC NOTICES

9 RECRUITMENT

10 MOTORS

11 PROPERTY

Family ANNOUNCEMENTS

Personal Messages

DEAR HEART OF JESUS

in the past I have asked for many favours, this time I ask for this special one (mention it). Take it Dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it, then his merciful eyes it will become his favour not mine. Amen. Say for 3 days. Promise publication and favour will be granted. Never known to fail. D.S

DEAR HEART OF JESUS

in the past I have asked for many favours, this time I ask for this special one (mention it). Take it Dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your father sees it, then his merciful eyes it will become his favour not mine. Amen. Say for 3 days. Promise publication and favour will be granted. Never known to fail. D.S

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7 EDUCATION

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8 PUBLIC NOTICES

Announcements - Public Notices

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Mr D Gibson, Official Receiver and trustee

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News in brief

- NEW car brand DS is building an exclusive range of 1955 Edition models to mark the 60th anniversary of the original DS. After ditching its direct relationship to parent company Citroen, DS is to build 1955 special DS 3 and DS 3 Cabrio models alongside 955 DS 4s and 955 DS 5s, split across all its markets globally. CEO Yves Bonnefont said: "To build today's DS brand we draw inspiration from the exceptional heritage of this legendary car. Today's DS models excel in refinement, quality materials, and outstanding style, technology, comfort and performance."

- DADS can be given a treat this Father's Day, with the chance to set a timed lap around the Top Gear Test Track. They can climb into the Kia Cee'd to test their mettle against the actors, singers and other celebrities that all set lap times in it. Families can also buy Dad a hot lap with The Stig, a chance to drive under tank fire or reshape their face with a drive in the windscreen-less Ariel Atom. A special offer is a 15-minute off-road drive and time in the Top Gear studio for £29. Vouchers at topgeartrackexperience.com or call 0844 2250 767.

Family-ready with adaptable space

Auto facts

Model: Toyota Verso Icon 1.6 Valvematic
Price: £20,300
Insurance group: 14 (1-50)
Fuel consumption (Combined): 42.8mpg
Top speed: 115mph
Length: 446cm/175.6in
Width: 179cm/70.5in
Luggage capacity: 15.5 cu ft (with five seats in place)
Fuel tank capacity: 13.2 gallons/60 litres
CO2 emissions: 154g/km
Warranty: Five years/100,000 miles

By David Duffy
dduffy@nqo.com

THE short name on the back of the car says it all. The Verso is simply versatility on four wheels.

Whether you have loads of luggage, lots of people or a combination of both, Toyota's compact multi-purpose vehicle swallows it all with no fuss or bother.

In a nutshell, the quiet, smooth, seven-seater Verso is a formidably family-friendly car.

Much of that flexibility comes from the spacious interior. The new Verso is slightly longer overall than its predecessor, but it is the seating system that gives the car such adaptability.

All versions have enough underfloor storage in the rear loadspace to hold three six-pack cases of 1.5-litre plastic bottles. There are also plenty of useful storage points around the cabin.

Add to that a centre console box, large door pockets, seatback storage beneath flip-up aircraft-style tables, second row underfloor storage, an overhead console and driver and passenger pockets for small items. such as phones and music players.

The UK Verso range comes in four trim levels – Active, Icon, Trend and Excel. Entry point is the five-seat Active with the 1.6 Valvematic petrol engine and six-speed manual transmission. A high specification is provided across all grades, with even the entry-level model coming equipped with front fog lights, air conditioning, electric front windows, tyre pressure warning and hill-start assist control.

The Toyota Verso Icon 1.6 Valvematic

The test model, in Icon specification, has more features including cruise control, a DAB digital tuner, rear privacy glass and a folding function on the electrically-adjustable door mirrors. It also came with two-tone, 16-inch alloy wheels. A choice of three engines is available, including a new 1.6-litre diesel, with the performance and efficiency to match the 2.0-litre unit it replaced, alongside 1.6-litre and 1.8-litre petrol engines.

The 2014 Verso was among the first models available with Toyota Touch 2, an updated version of Toyota's touchscreen multimedia system which includes Bluetooth for hands-free phone calls and sending and receipt of text messages, a rear-view camera, vehicle information, including trip data, climate control profile and management of settings.

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Futureproof buys

Upgrading your car gadgets is easy

THERE'S no need to feel behind the times with a low-tech set of wheels if you follow our guide to upgrading your gadgetry.

The march of technology makes our lives easier, often in ways we could not have imagined 10 years ago. However, it also means our cars are at risk of becoming obsolete more quickly.

If you want to avoid it being consigned to the techno-scrapheap, reboot it. You don't have to turn it into a DeLorean from Back To The Future, just take simple steps to keep it in the loop.

One of the first upgrades you can add is a USB port connection. Many newer cars have this as standard, but you can buy adaptors that plug into the 12-volt power socket.

This allows you to charge smartphones and tablets, and sophisticated versions let your phone make your car a Wi-Fi hotspot. Attaching your phone to the car is only a recent development. For older cars, this can mean missing out on music and satnav, but don't despair. It is simple to upgrade your car's stereo to accept a phone connection so you can stream media through the car.

Another simple upgrade to allow more choice of listening is a digital DAB radio. This is something you could do yourself or ask for a technician to fit at many car parts stores. With a digital radio, you can listen to many more stations and it means you won't be left in silence when FM radio is finally switched off in the next few years.

Just as simple as a DAB radio to fit is a Bluetooth connection between the car and your phone, MP3 player and other devices. It's simple to use and easy to install for a professional at a reasonable cost.

You can add parking sensors and a rear-view camera, and you could also consider a dash camera as an alternative to collision alert. It makes most drivers more alert when behind the wheel.

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